

REMARKS

Please reconsider this application in view of the above amendments and the followings remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully reconsidering this application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, and 12, are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 6, 8, 10, and 12.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 6-13 have been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to include limitations recited in claim 6, and claims 6-13 have been amended to include limitations recited in claim 3 and cancel limitations related to the first, second, third, and fourth stop means. Thus, no new matter has been added by this reply, as support for the amendments to the claims may be found, for example, within the originally filed claims.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-4 and 6-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 and 6-13 have been amended in this reply. To the extent that this rejection applies to claim 1 as amended, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

With respect to claim 1, the Examiner asserts that claim 1 is incomplete for omitting essential elements, the omission of these elements amounting to a gap between the

recited elements. The Examiner notes that these omitted elements include the elements for forming a hinge such that the apparatus of claim 1 may perform the operations of opening/closing and generating "a predetermined force." Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended in this reply to include the first case having a first hinge, a second case having a second hinge, a first biasing means, and a second biasing means. The first hinge of the first case turnably connects the first case to the hinge main body, and the second hinge of the second case turnably connects the second case to the hinge main body. Further, each of the first and second hinges comprise a first and second turnable member and a first and second fixing member, respectively. Furthermore, the first case includes a first biasing means, and the second case includes a second biasing means, in which the first and second biasing means generate the predetermined forces recited within claim 1. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, within claim 6. Thus, the opening/closing apparatus recited in claim 1 now includes the elements necessary for performing the operations of opening/closing and generating a predetermined force. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

With respect to claim 2, the Examiner asserts that it is unclear how the first and second turn prohibition means may also be defined as the first and second turn biasing means. In response, Applicant respectfully asserts that the first turn prohibition means is also defined as the first turn biasing means so as to define the additional function of the first turn prohibition/biasing means. For example, the first turn prohibition means may also be adapted to turn bias the hinge main body in a first direction when the hinge main body is located in the initial position. Accordingly, the first turn prohibition means is also defined as the first turn biasing means. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

With respect to claims 6-13, the Examiner asserts that the use of “stop means” within the claims is confusing because “stop means”, according to the specification, is part of the first case and the second case of the opening/closing apparatus, but not the hinge apparatus as recited within claim 6. Accordingly, this limitation, and all similar limitations, has been cancelled from claims 6-13. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, with respect to claims 6-13, the Examiner asserts that it cannot be understood how each of the means is structurally and functionally related to the “predetermined force.” Accordingly, claims 6-13 have been amended to include a first and second biasing means, in which the first and second biasing means generate the predetermined force. Support for this amendment may be found within the originally filed claims, or, for example, within the originally filed specification in lines 1-8 on page 28. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

With respect to claim 10, the Examiner asserts that the use of a third and fourth stop means is confusing because there is no reference to a first and second stop means. Accordingly, these limitations, and all similar limitations, have been cancelled from claim 10. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 12088/037001).

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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